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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 002142

SIPDIS

ISN/RA FOR RICHARD NEPHEW

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/21/2023

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [IAEA](#) [IR](#) [TRGY](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH CAUTIOUS ON IAEA SYRIA REPORT

REF: STATE 123074

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Young, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche November 20 to Arnaud Mentre, action officer for Iran in the MFA's ISN-equivalent. Mentre was phlegmatic about the IAEA report on Iran, noting that Iran's enrichment seems to be on "autopilot" for the moment. As for Syria, Mentre offered as an initial impression that the November 19 report was "preliminary" and that it would be difficult to build a consensus for a BOG resolution without "a more substantive report." Poloff noted that the November 19 report makes clear Syria's failure to cooperate fully with the IAEA, which combined with the discovery of man-made uranium particles at the Al-Kibar site more than justifies a resolution calling on Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA investigation. As for the Technical Cooperation project, Mentre deferred to his colleagues at the French mission to the IAEA in Vienna to render an opinion.

¶2. (C) Comment: Although Mentre's response was just a preliminary reaction -- he promised to share our demarche with DAS-equivalent Martin Briens and pass on any further substantive response -- his reluctance to pursue a resolution on Syria is unsurprising in light of France's policy of engaging Damascus with more carrots than sticks.

STAPLETON